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As a stranger give it welcome.
There are more things in heaven and earth,
Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

—*Hamlet.*

DEAR FRIEND:—

Let us have a little heart to heart talk about spitting. Why do you spit? Do you know what you spit? This is a homely subject but one of paramount interest to all of us. Perhaps there is no action of man which has more to do with his happiness and unhappiness than this little act.

Most of us spit from habit. Some of us spit because we have to. In health there is no necessity to spit. In certain forms of disease there is necessity. It may be laid down as an axiom that he who has to spit is not well.

What one spits is saliva, the secretions of the mucous membranes, or broken down tissue of some part of our breathing apparatus.

Saliva is secreted by the glands of the mouth, tongue and cheeks and has to do with digesting starchy food. It is a highly organized fluid and in its manufacture by the body considerable energy is consumed. It should not be wasted and, therefore, it is a very bad practice to eject it from the mouth.

The secretions of the mucous membranes

of the nose and throat are for the purpose of keeping the parts moist, and in health are not given off in a larger amount than is necessary. They are manufactured by small glands out of the blood. In disease these secretions are manufactured in large quantities in order to fight off the germs. Disease germs which grow on the mucous membrane are loosened up by these secretions and are thrown off with them. When a person spits out mucous secretions he always spits out disease germs of some kind. When there are no disease germs then there is no excessive mucus to spit out.

The principal diseases which affect the mucous membrane of the nose and throat are diphtheria, influenza, whooping cough, follicular tonsillitis and colds of various kinds. In all of these diseases the mucus which is spit out contains the micro-organisms which produce the disease.

It is quite possible that rheumatism is due to a poisoning from a micro-organism which grows on the mucous membrane of the nose and throat, especially in the crypts of the tonsils.

In such diseases as measles and scarlet fever, the mucous membrane of the nose and throat is affected as well as the skin, and the secretions of this membrane contain the micro-organisms which produce the disease.

It is quite likely that some forms of pleurisy are due to micro-organisms which grow on the mucous membrane of the nose and throat and are carried from there into the pleura.

It is possible also that many cases of appendicitis are due to micro-organisms which grow in the follicles of the tonsils and are carried from there into the appendix. The micro-organisms which produce these diseases, therefore, may be thrown out with the spit.

The micro-organism which produces pneumonia is thrown off from the mucous membrane of the nose and throat, sometimes, when people are in apparently good health.

When broken down tissue is spit out it usually comes either from the back part of the nose, from the tonsils or from the lungs. Most frequently it comes from the

lungs. Broken down tissue is always the result of a disease which has the power of destroying tissue. The most common disease with this power is tuberculosis. Most of the broken down tissue thrown off as spit is tuberculous matter and contains tubercle bacilli.

Sometimes tissue is destroyed by such micro-organisms as the streptococcus and staphylococcus, and then the matter which is thrown off contains these micro-organisms in great numbers.

From what has been said it will be seen that a very large proportion of the diseases which afflict mankind are spread from one person to another through spit. This happens in the following way: The person who spits ejects the matter into the street, on the sidewalk, into his home, into the workshop or upon a handkerchief. When he throws it on the sidewalk it dries up and is blown about for general distribution or is picked up by trailing skirts and carried to the home. When he ejects it into his home it dries, becomes pulverized and is distributed around through the house in the form of dust. The same thing hap-

pens in the workshop. When he spits into a handkerchief he soils his hands and mouth, and places the handkerchief into his pocket, thereby soiling his clothing. The matter dries in the handkerchief and every time he takes out his handkerchief he distributes the dry matter over himself and over everything about him.

It is the expectoration upon the sidewalks, in street cars and steam cars, in the workshops, in the theatres, churches and stores, which usually produce colds, influenza and diseases of that character. The epidemic begins with a few and runs like wild fire through the whole community until everybody has had the disease.

Diseases which spread more slowly, such as diphtheria, measles, whooping-cough, pneumonia and tuberculosis usually are spread through spitting in the house or into handkerchiefs. Spitting into handkerchiefs probably is the most prolific source of all and it is quite likely that many of these diseases are spread through handshaking, because of the contamination of the hand through the handkerchief.

Now my friend don't you think it is time to stop this habit and to give your fellows protection against the diseases which afflict you? Unless you have some disease you do not have to spit. If you have been spitting from habit, save your saliva, because you need it for the good of your body. If you are spitting because you have a disease, stop spitting where the matter which you throw out can do injury to others.

Perhaps you think this is hard to do. It is not so hard if you take the right way of doing it. Nowadays you can get a little paper pocket spit cup in any drug-store, into which you can spit without danger to yourself and others and which you can burn up when you go home. If you cannot get one of these little spit cups, get paper napkins and an ordinary cheap paper coffee bag. Carry the coffee bag in one pocket and a bundle of paper napkins in the other. When you have to spit or blow your nose use the paper napkin, fold it up nicely and put it in the paper bag. When you go home burn the paper bag. At home or in the workshop always use a paper spit cup to spit in and when there has been an ac-

cumulation of the expectorated matter burn the cup.

You will say this is rather troublesome and attracts too much attention. It is not so troublesome after you have accustomed yourself to it—and as to the attention, console yourself with the idea that you are helping to educate the world by your example. It will not be long before all are doing this and the person who does not do it will attract attention by his uncouthness.

Besides there is this consolation to be taken out of your act: by practising this method of disposing of your spit you probably will in a very short time get rid of the trouble which makes you spit. Has it ever occurred to you that you are constantly keeping up the diseased condition of your mucous membranes, or, if you have tuberculosis, the disease of your lungs, by constantly sowing new seed by your uncleanliness? You do not get well because you do not give yourself a chance.

Published for Gratuitous Distribution
by the
PENNSYLVANIA SOCIETY
for the
PREVENTION OF TUBERCULOSIS
Philadelphia, Pa.

Presented to the

Statistical Division, Surgeon-General's Library, United States Army

Washington, D. C.

BY

The Prudential Insurance Co. of America

Newark, New Jersey

Jupiter refused man fire, thereupon Prometheus stole it from Olympus. In revenge Jupiter caused Vulcan to make of clay a beautiful woman (the Greek Eve) and presented her to Prometheus. She was named Pandora, that is, the all gifted, for the gods presented her with all manner of beauty and charms, though these were coupled with cunning and deceit. Mercury gave her as a dowry a jar in which every evil was shut up. Prometheus (the name (signifying "forethought") refused her, but she was accepted by his brother Epimetheus (the man of "afterthought") who never thought of what he did until it had brought himself or others into trouble. In spite of his brother's warning not to accept presents from Jupiter he was ensnared by the charms of Pandora and took her for his wife. After marrying Epimetheus, Pandora opened the jar and out flew all evils, troubles and diseases which were before unknown to man.